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STEVEN MEZINIS
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AROMAS, CA 95004-9717

OFFICE OF PETITIONS

In re Application of :
Steven Mezinis :
Application No. 09/682,451 :
Filed: August 15, 2001 :
Title of Invention: :
ELECTRIC-MAGNETIC FIELD MOTIVATOR :

DECISION ON PETITION

This is a decision on the petition to revive the above-identified application under 37 CFR 1.137(a), filed on January 13¹, 2003.

The petition is **DISMISSED**.

Any further petition to revive the above-identified application must be submitted within TWO (2) MONTHS from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) are permitted. The reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition under 37 CFR 1.137." This is **not** final agency action within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 704.

The above-identified application became abandoned for failure to timely and properly reply to the final Office action, mailed on April 24, 2002. No extensions of time having been obtained pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a), the above-identified application became abandoned on July 25, 2002. A Notice of Abandonment was mailed on December 3, 2002.

Petition under 37 CFR 1.137(a) for unavoidable abandonment

A grantable petition to revive an abandoned application under 37 CFR 1.137(a) must be accompanied by: (1) the required reply (unless previously filed), which may met by the filing of a notice of appeal and the requisite fee; a continuing application; an amendment or request for reconsideration which *prima facie* places the application in condition for allowance, or a first or second submission under 37 CFR 1.129(a) if the application has been pending for at least two years as of June 8, 1995, taking into account any reference made in such application to any earlier filed application under 35 U.S.C. 120, 121 and 365(c); (2) the petition fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(l); (3) a showing to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(a) was unavoidable; and (4) any terminal disclaimer (and fee as set forth in 37 CFR 1.20(d)) required pursuant to 37 CFR 1.137(c). The instant petition lacks items (1) and (3).

¹This petition was filed on January 5, 2003 via facsimile; however, the petition was not considered on the merits because the petition lacked the petition fee.

Applicant has not provided an adequate showing of unavoidable delay

Applicant's Assertion

Petitioner asserts that the delay in responding to the April 24, 2002, because, for "causes unknown, this fax never reached [the USPTO]". Petitioner at Document 5. Petitioner was, therefore, unaware that his response was not received. Petitioner also avers that the delay was unavoidable "because it definitely was 'unintended'..." Id.

Applicable Law

Decisions on reviving abandoned applications on the basis of "unavoidable" delay have adopted the reasonably prudent person standard in determining if the delay was unavoidable:

The word 'unavoidable' . . . is applicable to ordinary human affairs, and requires no more or greater care or diligence than is generally used and observed by prudent and careful men in relation to their most important business. It permits them in the exercise of this care to rely upon the ordinary and trustworthy agencies of mail and telegraph, worthy and reliable employees, and such other means and instrumentalities as are usually employed in such important business. If unexpectedly, or through the unforeseen fault or imperfection of these agencies and instrumentalities, there occurs a failure, it may properly be said to be unavoidable, all other conditions of promptness in its rectification being present.

In re Mattullath, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (1912) (quoting Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31, 32-33 (1887)); see also Winkler v. Ladd, 221 F. Supp. 550, 552, 138 USPQ 666, 167-68 (D.D.C. 1963), aff'd, 143 USPQ 172 (D.C. Cir. 1963); Ex parte Henrich, 1913 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 139, 141 (1913). In addition, decisions on revival are made on a "case-by-case basis, taking all the facts and circumstances into account." Smith v. Mossinghoff, 671 F.2d 533, 538, 213 USPQ 977, 982 (D.C. Cir. 1982). Finally, a petition cannot be granted where a petitioner has failed to meet his or her burden of establishing that the delay was "unavoidable." Haines v. Quigg, 673 F. Supp. 314, 316-17, 5 USPQ2d 1130, 1131-32 (N.D. Ind. 1987).

Applicant is further advised that the Patent and Trademark Office must rely on the actions or inactions of duly authorized and voluntarily chosen representatives of the applicant, and applicant is bound by the consequences of those actions or inactions. Link v. Wabash, 370 U.S. 626, 633-34 (1962); Huston v. Ladner, 973 F.2d 1564, 1567, 23 USPQ2d 1910, 1913 (Fed. Cir. 1992); see also Haines v. Quigg, 673 F. Supp. 314, 317, 5 USPQ2d 1130, 1132 (D.N. Ind. 1987). Specifically, petitioner's delay caused by the actions or inactions of his voluntarily chosen representative does not constitute unavoidable delay within the

meaning of 35 U.S.C. 133 or 37 CFR 1.137(a). Haines v. Ouigg, 673 F. Supp. 314, 5 USPQ2d 1130 (D. Ind. 1987); Smith v. Diamond, 209 USPQ 1091 (D.D.C. 1981); Potter v. Dann, 201 USPQ 574 (D.D.C. 1978); Ex parte Murray, 1891 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 130, 131 (Comm'r Pat. 1891). In re Mattullath, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (1912) (quoting Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 31, 32-33 (1887)); see also Winkler v. Ladd, 221 F. Supp. 550, 552, 138 USPQ 666, 167-68 (D.D.C. 1963), aff'd, 143 USPQ 172 (D.C. Cir. 1963); Ex parte Henrich, 1913 Dec. Comm'r Pat. 139, 141 (1913).

Finally, a "delay (in responding) resulting from the lack of knowledge or improper application of the patent statute, rules of practice, or MPEP, [] does not constitute unavoidable delay." MPEP 711.03(c).

Analysis

It is the conclusion of this Office that a prudent and careful man in relation to their most important business would have taken steps to ensure the correspondence was received in the Office.

Petitioner is advised that there are three provisions wherein this Office will consider correspondence as being timely filed. The first method provides that

"correspondence required to be filed in the Patent and Trademark Office within a set period of time will be considered timely filed if the procedure described in this section is followed. The actual date of receipt will be used for all other purposes.

(1) Correspondence will be considered as being timely filed if:

(I) The correspondence is mailed or transmitted prior to the expiration of the set period of time by being:

(A) Addressed as set out in § 1.1(a) and deposited with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage first class mail; or

(B) Transmitted by facsimile to the Patent and Trademark Office in accordance with § 1.6(d); and

(ii) The correspondence includes a certificate for each piece of correspondence stating the date of deposit or transmission. The person signing the certificate should have a reasonable basis to expect that the correspondence would be mailed or transmitted on or before the date indicated.

37 CFR 1.8.

The second method, under 37 CFR 1.10, provides for the filing of papers and fees by "Express Mail." The Office considers the date the correspondence is shown to have been deposited as "Express

Mail" to be the "date-in" on the Express Mail mailing label. See Manual of Patent Examining Procedure ("MPEP") §513. The date indicated on the "date-in" on the Express Mail mailing label verifies that the package was actually mailed.

Finally, section 503 MPEP provides that

[i]f a receipt of any item (e.g., paper or fee) filed in the USPTO is desired, it may be obtained by enclosing with the paper a self-addressed postcard specifically identifying the item. The USPTO will stamp the receipt date on the postcard and place it in the outgoing mail. A postcard receipt which itemizes and properly identifies the items which are being filed serves as prima facie evidence of receipt in the USPTO of all items listed thereon on the date stamped thereon by the USPTO.

It is the conclusion of this Office that a prudent and careful man in relation to their most important business would have complied with one of the above methods. If Petitioner has complied with one of the three methods wherein this Office considers correspondence as being timely filed as set out above, Petitioner should submit such evidence in a renewed petition.

Alternate Venue

Petitioner is strongly urged to file a petition stating that the delay was unintentional. Public Law 97-247, § 3, 96 Stat. 317 (1982), which revised patent and trademark fees, amended 35 U.S.C. § 41(a)(7) to provide for the revival of an "unintentionally" abandoned application without a showing that the delay in prosecution or in late payment of an issue fee was "unavoidable." This amendment to 35 U.S.C. § 41(a)(7) has been implemented in 37 CFR 1.137(b). An "unintentional" petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) must be accompanied by the required petition fee, currently \$650.00.

The filing of a petition under 37 CFR 1.137(b) cannot be intentionally delayed and therefore must be filed promptly. A person seeking revival due to unintentional delay can not make a statement that the delay was unintentional unless the entire delay, including the delay from the date it was discovered that the application was abandoned until the filing of the petition to revive under 37 CFR 1.137(b), was unintentional. A statement that the delay was unintentional is not appropriate if petitioner intentionally delayed the filing of a petition for revival under 37 CFR 1.137(b).

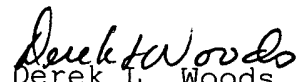
Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

By mail: Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Box DAC
Washington, D.C. 20231

By facsimile: (703) 308-6916
Attn: Office of Petitions

By hand: Office of Petitions
2201 South Clark Place
Crystal Plaza 4, Suite 3C23
Arlington, VA 22202

Telephone inquiries concerning this decision should be directed to the undersigned at 703-305-0014.


Derek L. Woods
Petitions Attorney
Office of Petitions